

CONCLAVE PROGNOSTICATION

Michael Kuch (Gamma Delta Psi - Gamma Alpha #114)

I could care less about predictions—weather, sports, world events. The future of the Fraternity, on the other hand, is something I have never been wrong about. Not because I claim to be a fortune teller, oracle or other such nonsense. I know from experience—inevitably history verifies all, at least from the victor's perspective—that change within Gamma moves at a glacial pace. Another fact that is not apt to alter unless the mindset of members at large—old and new, alike—cannot seek out alternative, proven methods for sustainability and growth.

Gamma Delta Psi—despite its perpetual metamorphosis over the past 129 years, from its founding as domain of society's young elite educated at fine schools, to its current incarnation as an Alumni Association of middle-aged Brethren—rarely changes, in any calculable manner.

Meaning, I've been at this Business of Brotherhood for thirty years now, well-seasoned by the ebb and flow of some incredibly wonderful and dare I say—live altering—moments. Still, after all these years, most at the highest form of governing, while serving in just about every capacity imaginable, there remains a constant, underlying dichotomy of sameness in spite of social progression, economic change, and a world that is less recognizable by the day.

The matter of Conclave 2008 will witness the requisite fist pumping, spirited thrust that has long been a hallmark of past Conventions and Regional Rallies. I have been there, I have done the same, and even watched with a distant amusement enough to know that whatever is said—no matter how well intended or by the highest of providence—so precious little will ever be accomplish, and that is, will once more be at the efforts of the few. To this point, much of what I have written is admittedly heavy dosed with pessimism. Then again, it is truthful and refreshing (to me) to relieve myself of the vacant hope that habitually concludes with ever large gathering of Gamma faithful.

No doubt, those days are over, and we are exceptionally better for it. It's no longer fashionable to stand up and claim this and that, what you're going to do. Deeds first, talk later. Get into 'doing'.

First, we need to understand the problem has always been us and not society, schools, economy, environment. Accepting accountability for past actions, or lack thereof, and accepting the responsibility and challenges to correct what is—and has been—wrong is the initial step to overcoming our false sense of complacency. I hear you Brother—you were not around back in 1991 or 1997 or 2006, when Fraternity was hopelessly falling down to its knees, suffocating from atrophied carcass by negligence. By whom? I suspect with good cause it is all of us, especially those of us gathering in less than one week at Conclave 2008.

Why could I came such a thing, that 'Us' - the "Usual Suspects" could be remotely responsible for the crash of Gamma? Well, who else had the power or interest to nurture it, heal it, and bring it back to state of fruition? Certainly, not the 'Brother' who attended Convention for the social aspect, never had written a letter (email) in his life, cared nothing but his own interests. You all know this guy. He isn't around any more, and he sure as heck is not reading this. If he is, then welcome home, Brother. It's payback time.

No, Brother—I am looking at you (and me in the mirror). The same couple of dozen Brothers who carried the torch from the moment they received Rituals. We're the cause. We're the vaccine, the solution. There's no one else out there to listen, let alone to do. It comes down 48 hours in Pennsylvania, and a handful of the most zealous, maniacal Brothers, who never knew the meaning of idle hands. These and our faithful Brothers elsewhere, who for one uncontrollable reason or another is unable to join us. And so, our lifelong journey continues.

ETA CHAPTER - PRESIDENT'S NOTE

Yuri 'Magnet' Calustro (Gamma Psi - Eta #63)

With the start of any new year comes the potential for greatness. For us at Eta, the New Year began in August with the same momentum and vigor that was ignited during Brother Education Day. We hit the ground running and only hope to pick up the pace.

It was with unanimous agreement within our chapter, that there were two key elements missing from our past few semesters here at Longwood: Community Service and Fundraisers. We currently have a schedule and monthly goals set for both, as well as, an official philanthropy for our chapter. Through this, we hope to not only get in good standings with the school, but more importantly, with the community.

Furthermore, we are currently taking the necessary measures to be accepted by the North-American Inter-fraternity Council. This will automatically give us acknowledgment at any school with a chapter of Gamma Psi, and open doors for us we once thought were locked. There are many requirements we must meet in order to be recognized, and we are doing what we can to chip away at each one. Nothing would be greater than to see our crest and letters displayed and supported by our school.

There is a lot ahead of us. Words such as Conclave, Expansion, Reviving, Organizing, and Effort have grown to be a part of our daily vocabulary. There is a lot we can do and a lot we will do, but we know that we cannot handle every situation on our own. There are some things that require a guiding hand, and for that we thank all of the dedicated Alumni that have put up with us. We are looking forward to the Conclave very much and hope to share with you our goals and hopes for the future.

Thank you.

FROM HERE TO WHERE?

Michael Kuch (Gamma Delta Psi - Gamma Alpha #114)

In less than a week a group of about twenty Brothers from Gamma Psi and Gamma Delta Psi will gather in Williamsport, PA at Conclave 2008. Their purpose is multi-faceted: to identify, define and plan the future path of Gamma. Whether this means re-structuring how we govern, or simply, to work jointly on projects, is anyone's guess. I have the simplest goal possible: to build the Fraternity. What this entails, however, is complex and not without challenges and caveats.

And so, it is with this purpose that **THE GARNET NEWSLETTER** (you are reading) was created; through the spirit of Brotherhood, in recognition of such a momentous occasion as a Conclave. Several months ago, Brother Trent Armitage (Gamma Psi - Eta Chapter) and I discussed the possibility of working together to publish such a journal. Its title - The Garnet - seemed the most logical and appropriate choice, considering it is one of the more visible means of identity that is shared with both Fraternities. With no shortage of issues to address at Conclave and ridiculously little time to contemplate such matters, it is necessary to openly voice varying thoughts and divergent opinions, through a written medium.

Considering highly anticipated debates will posture around the pros and cons of 'Joint Government' within GP and GDP, I expect a modicum of dissension between supporters and dissenters. My own leanings have for the most part been made public; a bias toward the so-called neo-Traditionalists—those Brothers content with the accepted and traditional means of organization, structure and governing.

However, I remain respectful and appreciative of the rationale associated with a merged structure, at least in certain perimeters. This movement—in the broadest of definitions—suggests a consolidated union for Gamma. One Gamma—High School and College levels—governed by a joint administration. Could it work? Certainly. Should it, is altogether a different matter.

There will be more questions than answers at the conclusion of Conclave, but it is a starting point—a summit—to introduce dialogue, to weigh options, identify challenges and opportunities. It is not a time for colossal discontent or indifference to the point of contempt. We are seeking solutions to existing problems while nurturing opportunities. What can we expect? A single weekend will certainly not suffice to address the prime issues we need to tackle. It is a conduit to other possibilities, which may only be realized through open communication and mutual understanding.

The fact that such an event was even conceived, and later (will) reach fruition, is a testament to the harmonious relationship between the Great Gamma's. My vision for Gamma Delta Psi—as it is for Gamma Psi—is to build upon the many small successes we have realized thus far in our Rejuvenation Movement. It is curious to note while we share inseparable history, we are at different stages in rebuilding: Gamma Psi—resurgent with a very active and enthusiastic Eta Chapter at Longwood University—can build upon its base with well aimed plans to establish additional Crescent Clubs. Gamma Delta Psi—fueled by nostalgia and rekindled Alumni support—seeks to rise from the remnants of a decade's long, self-inflicted bout of Fratricide.

The upside for both organizations is obvious. At one time, the very reasons we had attributed for its downfall—the Cyber Age—is now considered a viable instrument in aiding its resurrection. The Internet is the most valuable asset for us in terms of communication and information gathering, whether it's parlayed through Facebook, My Space, or whatever means. What more can be expected from today's youth culture, imprisoned by misplaced alliances, where living vicariously by experiences propagated through engineered programming (media, Internet, entertainment, revisionist history)? And then only to endeavor aimlessly for acceptance by—or identification with—just about anything, provided it is recognizable as anti-Anything; gang-banger, dope feign, cyber terrorist, homophobic/gay, tattoo/pierced, alternative ... Ad Nauseam. Remember when we were the bad boys simply because we wore 'colors' or emblems of membership? I'll take my chances with the so-called elitist, exclusionary Greek groups every day of the week over the aforementioned malignant deadbeats.

Doesn't it make sense that a unique identity can be claimed through membership in a Fraternity? We may not be Altar Boys—although there are the obvious exceptions—but surely, we are more 'attractive' than the alternatives poorly feigning as lifestyle 'choices' for students.

TRUST FUND SUMMARY

Michael Kuch (Gamma Delta Psi - Gamma Alpha #114)

The purpose of the following summary is to itemize recent financial transactions, publish Conclave expenditures, and present account balances as it pertains to the Trust Fund. A more in-depth Trust Fund report will be filed at Conclave including recommendations for new investments, budgets and appropriation of monies to future projects.

As of September 3, 2008, Gamma Delta Psi Fraternity International had a consolidated balance of \$13,142.95 (CDN\$). This fund consists of a Community Plus Plan (Basic Checking/Chequing Account) with a current balance of \$2,637.60. This amount was increased the same day by \$2,000.00 from \$637.60, to offset Conclave expenses estimated to exceed \$1,500—the majority appropriated for the Luncheon Banquet, Golf Shirts, and Printing expenses. A smaller portion is set aside for miscellaneous expenses including postage and awards. A post-Conclave Expense Report will follow in October.

The balance of the Community Plus Plan is expected to be approximately \$1,000.00, an amount that was agreed upon by the Board of Trustees to maintain as liquid to be used for anticipated funds for upcoming functions and provisions reserved for a New Expansion Program.

The Trust Fund portfolio has two Money Market GICs (Guaranteed Investment Certificates) registered with TD Canada Trust in the amounts of \$5,077.17 (long-term) and \$4,778.61 (maturing on October 1, 2008).

When the current Board of Trustees accepted management responsibilities of the Trust Fund in 1996, the amount was less than half its current balance (valued) at approximately \$6,500. Its doubling effect has taken some 12 years to accomplish. While the return is acceptable considering interest rates were at miserably low (1.5% - 2.5%) much of the term, nominal returns were not diverted back into the Fraternity's Operating Budget. Thus, planned growth (expansion) by the previous administration (IBC) was negated for such reasons and others far too extraneous to accommodate in this report.

My recommendation to the Conclave is to appoint a Budgetary Committee lead by the Board of Trustees to implement the best practices and policies for future budgets. With numerous financial obligations in 2009—130/40 Anniversary in the South and North, publications, communications, Chapter Reactivation, Expansion, etc.—there is no shortage of major expenses to address. A prime caveat is that we must continually seek ways to perpetually build assets of the Trust Fund. Official Fraternity functions should be planned for profit, with proceeds in part being distributed to meaningful Civic projects and refueling the Fund.

Gamma Delta Psi Fraternity International

Cordially Invites You To The

“ **GAMMA ALPHA** ” **ALUMNI REUNION**

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2008

Cocktails @ 5:30 pm

ARIZONA'S B-BAR + GRILL

(Reserved Private Room)

215 Carlingview Drive - Etobicoke, Ontario

www.arizonabarandgrill.com

\$10 / Brother

(Includes Assorted Food Trays)

All Brothers who **RSVP by **October 1/08****

Will also receive a **Free **ΓΔΨ** T-Shirt**

Please state your T-Shirt Size and Contact information in your response to:

www.alumni@gammadeltapsi.com

Or: **Michael Kuch @ (416) 910-2552**

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THE GOALS OF GAMMA PSI

Trent 'Trout' Armitage (Gamma Psi - Eta #62)

I have only been in this fraternity for a short period compared to others, however I believe I have been privileged to witness extreme greatness from our active and alumni brothers. However, we can do even better and we must do even better. Eta Chapter of Gamma Psi is the last hope for greatness. Without us there would be no active Gamma and no one to continue the greatness of this fraternity. Eta has gone through a lot in the last couple years. I must admit some of us have made our share of mistakes, but isn't that what growing up is about? How many of you got in a little trouble in your college days? However, we can prevent a lot of these things from happening again. Longwood University and the Farmville police department have unfairly targeted Gamma Psi since coming to Longwood simply because we don't belong to the North American Inter-Fraternity Council (NIC). We need to change that.

Yuri and I have done some research and even talked to the CEO/President of the NIC. We have a real chance to become part of this organization. Many might say, What will that change about Longwood? Well, in the NIC by-laws it says that that "Host Institution will support open recruitment and will not prohibit any male enrolled as a full time student in good standing from participating in rush recruitment activities and joining an NIC member fraternity. Host institution will not prohibit NIC member fraternity from recruiting/rushing male students on campus". This means that Longwood and all other schools will have to accept us. I believe in today's Modern Greek system it is the only way we can continue the great traditions of this fraternity.

This goal will not be easy. In fact it may be the hardest thing this fraternity has ever done. It will require a lot of work from both the active brothers and alumni. Better records will be needed; a more active international board, more chapters and other things will be needed. The rules to become a member are not impossible and if we all do our part then we can apply for membership at their meeting in December 2009.

Eta chapter has already started. We have started to oversee the creation of new chapters at Virginia Tech and Butte Community College, CA. We have also picked chapter philanthropy, FACES food bank and set-up dates for fundraising efforts. At this conclave I want it to be seen as a starting point for this goal of NIC membership, by December 2009. I hope the alumni are up for this challenge because we cannot do it without you.

NIRVANA CHAPTER

Brother James William Lee (ΓΞ)

1956-2008

It's weird, the signals we get in life, about life. Sometimes the trivial and the playful come back to us as crucial and serious. Sometimes the jokes we tell, or pranks us pulled return to haunt us....literally.

My teenage years were a blur of activity: trips, parties, projects, successes and failures passing so fast that neither was dwelled upon, and most important, Brotherhood found and bonded forever. When I was 16 or 17, I was a member of a group of 20 or so young men. As any group goes, there was a core of a few that provided the inspiration, the instigation, and the leadership. I was Honored to be one of the few.

Barney was the quick one. Physically, he was slim, fast and agile. I'd seen him run circles around an opponent in a fight and wear him down with evasion and jabs. Verbally, his wit was a saber wielded by a master. Whether you wanted to trade insults or punches with him, you were definitely the underdog.

Trapper was a hulking bear of a man. Short, stocky and all muscle, he waded into every situation and bulldozed his way through. He didn't think fast, he didn't fight fast, but he was thorough and didn't quit until he achieved what he thought was the right outcome.

Fortunately, or unfortunately at times, I was stuck in the middle of these two. They were, they are, my Brothers. I had a good line for those that wanted to escalate a quarrel with me - "You better watch my left hand because it is sneaky and fast, and you better watch my right because it can hit like a mule kicks!"

Barney was my left hand, Trapper my right. Everyone in town knew it and nobody bothered me - or the other two. The funny thing was, nobody knew who the leader was and who the backup was. It changed whenever the situation changed. Leadership and followers was never a question. We were truly a team, never sure who was in the lead and not caring because we were always ahead of the pack.

That was 30 years ago. Many good times and many tough times passed. We separated and came back together more times than we should have. Barney has his life, Trapper has his, I have mine. A few times, when support was needed, we called on each other. Now though, it is painting a room or installing a new window...nothing that would keep us out of the hospital.

I woke up last Saturday to my very normal life with a not so normal problem. My right hand was asleep, and despite my attempts through massage or flexing, I could not get it to return to normal. I ignored it, expecting that it would go away and things would be normal again soon. Things will never be normal again.

Later that day I got a phone call - Trapper had collapsed and died.

After many years of being right-handed, counting on it to be there when I needed it without any thought of the importance or reliance, it was gone. It is hard to imagine the rest of my life without my right hand. Thankfully, my left is quick and agile.

Mark Laminman (Gamma Xi Chapter)